

WV Developmental Disabilities Council
October 27, 2015
Quarterly Meeting
Blennerhassett Hotel, Parkersburg, WV

MINUTES

Members present: Doug Auten, Greg Bilonick, Angie Breeden, Deborah Davis, Delmar Davis, Julie Dial, Amber Hinkle, Betty Holliday, Betsy Peterson for Pat Homberg, Mary Etta Jones, Kelly Miller, Christina Mullins, Pat Nisbet, Kristin O'Neal, Wanda Proffitt, Clark Queen, Tara Roush, Jon Sassi, Jenni Sutherland, Tina Tanner, Melvin West, and Sheila Zickefoose.

Members absent: Brent Bush, Jonathan Chaffin, Pat Elliott, Clarice Hausch, Jane McCallister, Beth Morrison, Pat Moss, and Stacey Thomas.

Staff present: Christy Black, Jim Cremeans, Linda Higgs, and Steve Wiseman.

Guests present: Marsha Spiker (DRS) and Julie Pratt.

Call to Order, Welcome: Deborah Davis called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Introductions and Announcements, Mission Statement Reminder: Deborah asked Members to introduced themselves, followed by a request for any announcements. Deborah informed Members a sympathy card for Jane McCallister would be passed around for signing. Steve advised everyone that Clarice Hausch, Executive Director of West Virginia Advocates (WVA), had called to inform him she would be retiring effective the end of the year, and reminded Members that Pat Moss, Executive Director of the WV University Center for Excellence in Disabilities (WVUCED) is also leaving her position at the end of October.

Julie Dial read the Council's Mission Statement.

Public Comments: None

Approval of July 28, 2015 Meeting Minutes: After reviewing the Minutes, Tara moved and Doug seconded the motion to approve the Minutes as written. Motion carried.

New Business

Legislative Statements for 2016: Angie Breeden reported on behalf of the Legislative Statements workgroup, informing Members that the *Statements* were shortened in response to feedback from Legislators. Workgroup Members were Angie, Deborah, Julie and Kelly. **Angie moved and Kelly seconded the motion to approve the Council's Legislative Statements for the upcoming session. Motion carried.**

2016 Meeting Dates and Locations: Deborah reviewed the dates and locations for the Council's 2016 quarterly meetings, which were set by the Executive Committee. A list was in Members' packets. Dates will also be sent to Members on Outlook Calendar. They are scheduled as follows:

January 26, 2016 at the John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston, WV.

April 26-27, 2016 at the Bridgeport Conference Center in Bridgeport, WV. This will be a two day meeting and retreat to work on the Council's new Five Year State Plan.

July 26, 2016 at the Tamarack Conference Center in Beckley, WV.

October 25, 2016 at the Comfort Suites in Mineral Wells, WV.

State Plan Update: Jim provided Members an update. The current State Plan ends on September 30, 2016. He anticipates minor edits will be submitted to the Council's federal funder, the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD), in December, 2015.

In preparation for the development of a new Five Year State Plan, the Council is now holding public forums to gather input around the State on issues that are important to people with developmental disabilities. An Unmet Needs Survey will also be distributed in December. The final Plan must be submitted to AIDD on or before August 15, 2016.

No Wrong Door Update: Jenni presented an overview of the No Wrong Door (NWD) Initiative administered by the BOSS. Jenni said that West Virginia was one of 28 states to receive a Federal NWD twelve (12) month planning grant to develop a Three Year Plan that aims to transform multiple service access points and programs into a single statewide NWD system. The Initiative is funded by the Administration on Community Living (ACL), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA).

Jenni said that West Virginia's NWD System Three Year Implementation Plan identifies actions the state would need to take to make it easier for people from all ages and disability groups to access long term services and supports (LTSS). Jenni said that the final plan for the Initiative is due December 31, 2015. The Plan was developed by a core Steering Committee made up of representatives from the BOSS, Bureau for Medical Services (BMS), Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities and the Developmental Disabilities Council. Some highlights of Jenni's presentation included:

- A survey found that 30-40% of people do not know where to look for home and community based services.
- Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) have been in existence since 2007, but many people still do not know about them.
- An on-line data base is being developed to assist people in finding resources in their area.
- The project is in the process of developing formal agreements and partnerships with access sites.
- Options Counseling will provide unbiased service and support options for people after assessing their needs. It will be provided by agencies that are not offering direct services, and therefore have no vested interest in where people go to receive needed services.
- The project plans to develop a call system that will be available 24 hours/day, seven days/week, which will be operated with bi-lingual staff.
- The project also provides pre-screening for the Money Follows the Person (MFTP) program and the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Waiver.
- The project plans to apply for federal funding next year for its Three Year Plan.

I/DD Waiver Update – Pat provided Members an update on the State's Transition Plan. Some of the highlights included:

- Applications for all three Waiver programs were approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) with the caveat that the Transition Plans be improved upon.
- Rose Lowther-Berman of BMS is visiting day habilitation sites and residential sites (group homes and agency owned or leased ISSs) to determine their level of compliance with the new Home and Community Based Settings rule. She should complete her visits to all sites by December.

- Most agencies will have a Plan of Compliance. Agencies have until March, 2019 to be in compliance. It is anticipated that some will never be in compliance.
- BMS will begin looking prior to that date at transition options for clients in facilities that will not meet compliance guidelines so they will not all be transitioning at once.
- The Quality Improvement Advisory (QIA) Council will have a mini-committee to look at the information Rose is collecting with her.
- Pat expects other states will want to see the WV Review Tool.
- She suggested the Council may want to have Rose present at a future meeting.

Pat then provided an update on the I/DD Waiver. Highlights included:

- CMS approved the State's I/DD Waiver application on Sep. 24th.
- A Draft Manual is open for public comment until 5:00 p.m. on Nov. 1st.
- State-wide trainings on the new Manual will be held in seven locations, beginning next week in Morgantown (Nov. 2-3). (An additional location, Charleston, was added following this report.)
- Agencies receive training on things that families will not be trained on, such as the web portal and WV CARES.
- There are 1400 slots reserved for families and 700 slots for agencies.
- The Power Point trainings, as well as some videotaped trainings, will be available on the Bureau for Medical Services' (BMS) webpage.
- The state has one independent service coordination agency at this time, and one other application is close to being approved.

Steve asked about the possibilities of amending the approved application due to health and safety concerns, or other serious problems, and what the process for doing so would be. Pat indicated that the BMS could amend as needed. Doing so would open up the entire application for comment again.

In response to a question, she also reported there are 4,634 approved slots and the wait list is around 1,000 people.

There was extra time on the Agenda prior to lunch, so Doug agreed to provide an overview and update to Members on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Highlights included:

- WIOA is a federal law that reauthorizes the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. WIOA creates a much larger role for the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) in working with students at younger ages and in transition planning from high school to work. WIOA also requires coordination of effort between DRS, the general workforce system (Workforce WV) and Education in meeting the employment needs of people with disabilities.
- WIOA will change how DRS conducts business in schools settings. Previously, DRS school counselors may have worked with a student through school and beyond (to employment or exiting DRS services), possibly five or six years. This restricted the numbers of students who could be served.
- School counselors now will only work with high school students. They are targeting them in their sophomore year, or age 16. The law allows them to go down to age 14.
- All staff around the State were trained in September on the requirements and goals of WIOA.
- They have found it difficult working with the State Department of Education (DE) due to staff moving around and changing areas of responsibility. They are trying instead to work at the local level, particularly with Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs). Each RESA has at least one transition person hired through the 20/20 Initiative.
- Workforce systems are also changing, with a focus on youth.
- Fifteen percent (15%) of the DRS case service budget must now be spent on school-age individuals and students, although no additional funds are provided.
- DRS may purchase local Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) services and group activities for students (such as meeting with employers, visiting colleges).

- DRS has added Employment Specialists trained in Benefits Counseling, who will be available around the State to help to dispel families concerns and the myths around losing needed benefits if working.
- States are now two years into the new five year law and federal rules for it have not yet been written. DRS has been informed they have now been “fast tracked” and may be completed by summer 2016.
- A concern is that DRS has about a dozen vacancies in schools around the state because they are unable to attract and retain qualified workers due to the low pay.

Doug then answered questions from Members. Betsy remarked that services are not available since the Rehabilitation Center in Institute was closed and expressed concern that we are losing all the kids who benefitted before. Doug stated that DRS has 80 vendors around the State to provide most of those services, but that some pockets of the State are underserved. He believes the new HCBS rules will likely cause others to close.

Kelly inquired whether DRS employees in each county follow the same policies. She indicated families in different counties often receive different information. Doug suggested contacting the area supervisor if there were discrepancies in the information provided.

Delmar commented that it seems we spend a lot of money on youth with disabilities until they graduate; they we tell them to “go home and die.”

Jim asked if they are developing a unified State Plan. Doug responded that they are.

Steve said that West Virginia has ranked very low (50th) in the employment of persons with I/DD for a number of years. Doug said that DRS ranks #1 nationally in getting people to work who go through the program .

Members’ Issues and Concerns: Delmar reported that his pet peeve is inaccessible sidewalks. He spoke of sidewalks which have curb cuts at one end, but when one reaches the other end there is no curb cut so you must turn around

and go back. He stated, “If they’re going to build a ramp on one end, they should build one on the other end!”

State Plan Forum for Council Members: Following lunch, Julie Pratt facilitated a forum for Members like the other forums being held around the State.

Adjourn: Melvin moved and Tara seconded the motion to adjourn.